

OUR EDUCATIONAL FUTURE.

A meeting of the Parents' National Educational Union (Richmond Branch) was held at Highclere House. There were about thirty members present who had anticipated the pleasure of hearing a paper on "The Hopes and Fears of Our Educational Future," from Miss A. Wood, the principal of the well-known Maria Grey Training College. Unfortunately Miss Wood's severe illness prevented her appearance, but the paper she had prepared was kindly read by Miss Stephenson in a most sympathetic manner.

Miss Wood, who, throughout her paper took a very broad view of education, said that we stood on the threshold of the 20th century all a-tingle with hope and expectancy, so great had been the advance in mental, moral, and physical science during the 19th century, so that we now have a wider conception of what life means, and aim at being and doing, as well as knowing. Our first hope is of new discoveries in the region of mind, to help us to harmonise the much there is to know with our comparatively small powers of retention. This may come either gradually through evolution, or more rapidly by means of some great teacher. Our second hope lies in the realization of organic evolution, showing that the lines of change are the law of life. This gives encouragement to the teacher and parent, who, recognising that the main trend is forward and upward, have but to introduce the child to his inheritance and give him power of his environment. So we shall welcome rather than fear change, for if our hope—like Watts' famous picture—ends in apparent failure, the "single string" for our children the lyre may be complete. Our third hope is that we no longer seek to mould and chisel the child after a pattern on the old high school system, but seek to aid him in the development of himself. Our fourth hope lies in the growing stir of discontent at the present state of education as a whole. Our fifth hope is the attempt now being made to systemise secondary education. Our sixth hope is the awakening desire of the parent to approach and

co-operate with the teacher, and to understand the child. This is shown where parents are admitted to watch the ordinary school work with no additional display.

Miss Wood then turned to the consideration of the darker side of the picture, and said that our first great fear was the total neglect of physical development in primary schools—the long, stuffy hours in rooms, and the often inadequate playgrounds or time for open-air play. The second fear is the undue exaltation of physical hygiene in secondary schools, where the undue prominence of games and sports does not tend to develop well-balanced natures, to whom beauty, truth, and goodness are as necessary as health and fresh air. The third danger lies in the signs of a reaction against the higher education of girls before it can be said to have really begun. The outcry against "over work" could be met, said Miss Wood, by preventing late hours and too early examination, and by eliminating the competitive element in the latter. The fourth danger lies in the fear that the yoke of Government may be laid too heavily on secondary schools, especially if the examiners are tempted to use their great powers amiss. The fifth is that appointments to the teaching staff may be made too often by committees instead of by the head master and mistress under whom the subordinates will have to work. The sixth danger is that the religious and political fight which has already worked such harm in primary education may similarly affect secondary schools. Miss Wood then enumerated sundry other occasions for hope and fear. Firstly we have hope, because a noble character, rather than mere utility, is now the aim of education. Secondly we are hopeful because local authorities are allowing valuable experiments, such as the Findlay School at Manchester, to be made, to allow of education being adapted to special local needs. There is a great fear that "child study," an undue poking and prying, may result from our very attempts to understand the child, and such books as "Adolescence," which point out many of the great dangers, may be exaggerated, because the data is largely gained in this manner. There is a fear that co-education, which should become an educational hope, may become popular simply because it is cheap. Its due realisation as a hope depends on the head of the school where it is carried on. There is hope in the marked growth of small schools, the competition

among them driving the inefficient out of the field and breaking down the power of the great barracks. There is hope in the reaction against the tyranny of examinations. There is hope that we are adopting sounder and broader methods of religious teaching, boldly facing difficulties, and encouraging research. There is a fear that education is falling too much, as in America, into the hands of women. The need for trained men teachers is enormous. There is a fear that the modern lust for amusement and entertainment prevents a certain amount of wholesome neglect of children. They are so apt to be amused that they come to school or college "to get as much fun out of it as possible." There is a danger in over care and supervision which forgets the natural reserve of children and drives them into crooked ways. Finally Miss Wood held up an ideal future for an educational Utopia, in which liberty and trust were the chief factors, and where pupil and teacher should be free to exchange the spark of life, and the pupil be responsible in a degree undreamed of at present for the selection of his own education.

An animated discussion followed, after the chairman had expressed his appreciation of Miss Wood's broad and lofty paper. Mrs. Yoxall said that she believed the day of neglect of physical education in primary schools might be said to be over, and that the crying need at present was to educate the parents in cottage homes in the primary laws of health, that they might not retard at home the development of their children. Other speakers drew attention to possible dangers if the child were allowed to select the subjects of its own education, Miss Rowe giving an account of the failure of this system of "options" in America. Another speaker said that modern education so often failed nowadays to make children read, a failure which the Parents' Review School is doing its best to prevent. Yet another member present, who said she had been trained in the Maria Grey College, spoke on the modern passion for games crowding out hobbies and the pursuit of natural history, as there was not time for both. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to Mrs. Sharpe for her kind invitation of the members, and of thanks to Miss Wood for her paper, with wishes for her speedy recovery.

HAMBURG.

Hamburg is a delightful town when one is favoured with fine weather. With an east wind, it is dull and a little depressing. But such an interesting place! The harbour alone is full of attractions. Hamburg is still a republic, a state in herself; and when she joined the Imperial Customs Union in 1888, she kept a certain area as a Free Port, where ships can lade and unlade free of duty. Anything imported into Germany goes through the Customs, but as far as I can understand, the *Frei Hafen* is a convenient spot for exchanging goods from one vessel to another, without the expense of paying duty twice. A large proportion of the vessels there carry the English flag.

The quais are lined with magnificent red-brick warehouses, which replace many picturesque old streets pulled down in 1888. But these warehouses are extremely handsome buildings, and indeed, the majority of red-brick erections in Hamburg struck me by their dignified beauty. There are plenty of the old, half-timbered houses with projecting upper stories, still standing over the innumerable canals, where the barges used to come up to unlade at the warehouse doors. But the water is very low this year (1904)—there has not been so little water in the Elbe for fifty years, and it is interfering rather sadly with trade. We visited the "*Moltke*," one of the largest steamers of the Hamburg-American Line, and were much impressed by the enormous number of steerage passengers that could be accommodated. It was consoling to hear that each man's mattress and pillow are burnt at the end of the voyage. Notices for the instruction of steerage passengers were printed in German, English, Polish, Russian, and Hebrew.

Hamburg has a delightful broadened river or lake, the Alster, whose steamboats take one into the heart of the town so much more pleasantly than electric trams. The Alster banks are carefully kept, and one does not feel shut up in the town, having the lake to walk by.

Of course, owing to the great fire in 1842, a number of the best buildings are modern, *e.g.* the Rathans: but it is a

thing of beauty, and would delight handicraft-loving souls. One small room is entirely decorated by chip carving, done by the children in an orphanage; doors, window panels, cornices, etc., all of excellent design. A distinct scheme of decoration has been thought out for each room, hall, or staircase, and the loving finish of details is most refreshing. There were nine architects, and it took eleven years to build. This sounds like a guide book to Hamburg; but we do love it so, we cannot stop talking about it when once we begin.

I saw some magnificent specimens of leather work there, also some coloured, which I like less. Gepuntzle Lederarbeiten, as it is called, seems all the rage; both bookbinding and furniture were lovely, as well as innumerable little things such as we make. The Hamburg arms are very decorative, and appear everywhere, as well as the German eagle.

When the Kaiser and Kaiserin were in the neighbourhood the town was illuminated in their honour. We had the pleasure of seeing them and were lucky to come in for the festivities.

Some of you might like to know that my sister and I boarded with a family at £3 10s. od. per week for the two, a daily lesson included. We crossed by sea from Harwich, which takes about thirty-two hours. It is an economical way of travelling, and was, in our case, pleasant. The food costs about 10s. each way. We had lessons, as it happened, from a board school teacher who taught us excellently. Her method was to let us prepare a few pages of a German story book, with the dictionary, and to hear us relate in German what we had read. I found it an enormous help towards conversation. We got her to let us into her school one day, but it was not impressive. She had the youngest boys, about eight years, and they appeared to work at *words* all the time. The naughty ones were thrashed at the end of school hours. There is a delightful lesson, called "Heimathskunde," given in such schools, though, unfortunately, we did not hear one. The history of different quarters of the town, streets, houses, celebrities, etc., is taught to the children, and then they are taken to visit the places they hear about. Both Mendelssohn and Brahms were born in Hamburg. The latter's house is one of the most picturesque old structures in the town.

A. D.

MISSIONARY LETTER.

DEAR EDITOR,

The students who helped to make the quilt for the Toro Hospital will be glad to hear of its safe arrival.

Truly yours,

E. KITCHING.

C. M. S.,

ON THE ROAD GOING TO MENGU, TO CATCH
STEAMER OF JAN. 24TH AT MENBASSA,

JANUARY 4TH, 1905.

DEAR MISS KITCHING,

Last mail brought your letter of November 27th, and also the parcel sent by you containing a beautifully-worked quilt, and many tailed and T bandages.

I am only so sorry that, as you see, I have left Kabarole for furlough and cannot have the pleasure of seeing the handiwork displayed to view in the hospital. Will you tell your students how very much we admired the squares worked by each, bringing out so much originality. I hope you will approve of what we intend to do with the quilt; we thought it really too good and handsome for a bed, and also we were afraid that it would get so soon dirty and would want washing so often that it might spoil the colours, so we decided that as we are very badly in want of a screen cover for the men's ward, to cover a screen with it. Just before Miss Allen and I left the Toro Hospital, a trained nurse, a Miss Reed, came to take our place, and she said that she would put the quilt to this use, and she thought it would greatly interest the patients as they lay ill in bed to look at the different designs. We are very grateful for the T and for the many tailed bandages; we now, with this addition, have a plentiful supply to go on with for some long time to come. I